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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6932
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0761
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4308
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7852
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5412
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 3420
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1207
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 001175

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STATE FOR EAP AND IO; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/20/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: BURMA: ACTIVISTS DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Classified By: Pol Officer Sean O'Neill for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Contrary to warnings by the authorities, human rights activist Myint Aye and his supporters held a ceremony commemorating the 59th anniversary of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Rangoon on December 10. Poloffs observed a heavy plain-clothes police presence outside the venue, but security forces did not interfere with the program or arrest any of its participants at the scene. Pro-democracy activist Su Su Nwe was ordered to appear in court today. Authorities did not formally announce her appearance and have not revealed what charges would be filed against her. U Gambira's family briefly met with the detained monk today, and said he appeared in good health. End Summary.

HUMAN RIGHTS CEREMONY

¶2. (C) On December 10, Poloffs attended a ceremony organized by the Human Rights Defenders and Promoters (HRDP) to commemorate the 59th anniversary of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. HRDP's Chairman Myint Aye, along with members from around the country, spoke to an audience of approximately 30 about human rights abuses in their regions and HRDP's efforts to help the victims. We observed a large and obvious plain-clothes police presence across the street from the venue. Authorities openly photographed the attendees as they entered and left the premises, but did not otherwise interfere with the program or arrest any of the participants at the scene. However, Myint Aye told us the police had warned him against organizing the event, which they said would be considered criminal incitement of public unrest. He told attendees after the event that he was concerned he would be arrested soon, but reaffirmed his commitment to documenting and combating human rights abuses in Burma.

SU SU NWE

¶3. (C) A Bahan Township judge told an Embassy contact that labor and human rights activist Su Su Nwe was ordered to appear before a Rangoon court today. NLD lawyers Aung Thein

and Nyan Win said they not know whether she had any legal counsel, and expressed serious doubts the process would be fair. Other opposition sources said they did not think her family had been formally notified of her scheduled appearance in court and doubted they would be permitted to attend. Su Su Nwe, who suffers from heart disease, was arrested on November 13 and has not seen her family since.

U GAMBIRA UPDATE

14. (C) U Gambira's sister, Lwin Lwin Myint, told us authorities permitted the detained monk to see his family for twenty minutes today. She reported that her brother appeared to be in good health and spirits. She also told us that U Gambira's father, U Min Lwin, was released on December 4. U Min Lwin was detained along with his son on November 4. So far, neither U Gambira nor his family have been informed of the charges against him.

COMMENT

15. (C) Su Su Nwe, Myint Aye, and U Gambira are three of Burma's bravest and most effective pro-democracy activists. They have persevered in their efforts to bring about political reform in Burma knowing that they risked imprisonment. Their courage and commitment stands in sharp contrast to Than Shwe's cowardice and deceit.

VILLAROSA